



## OLIVERIAN

Dear Parents:

What a month. What a week. What a day. The world has changed and is changing still and we have all been scrambling to understand, adapt, and plan accordingly.

For the past hour, though, I tromped in the woods behind our house with my boy and my dog. After a day of meetings and conference calls about COVID-19, distance learning, and the end of the world as we know it, I was too mentally



tired to think of anything interesting to do, like look for bugs or identify bird calls or track animals. So instead we just picked up some trash that a bear had scattered last fall. The debris field was finally revealed again this week by the spring snow melt. So we stomped around in the mud and made a game of finding cans and plastic bags and bottles. It was a grubby window of normalcy in this wild time. We filled a whole trash can and had a pretty good time doing it. I feel much better now.

I hope that even as you scramble to understand, adapt, and plan, you will notice the pedestrian moments of normalcy--grubby or otherwise--and remember that amid all this change, the essentials remain the same. We still have what matters.

We are working hard here, meanwhile, to ensure that the essentials remain the same for you and your child with regard to your Oliverian experience. For Oli students, earning a college-

preparatory high school diploma is not merely an academic exercise; it is a profound and necessary journey of personal growth, social maturation, and intellectual grit. It is a highly relational enterprise. The work of a village. As I mentioned in my last email, we have designed a very high-touch distance support and learning program to help our students continue toward the bulls eye of a diploma--and all that it entails--with as little disruption as possible.

While we hope that your student will land back on campus very soon, the prospect of being at home for an extended period of time makes our support all the more important. Our plan is to deliver not only academic content and instruction, but person to person academic, counseling, and parent support, plus fun and goofy stuff to keep us all connected and engaged--like virtual tea clubs, yoga sessions, and game nights. We will also provide a clear and customized structure for your child as well as daily monitoring and reports so that you can easily assess and support their daily engagement. Our plan is to connect voice to voice by phone and face to face on Zoom every weekday (often multiple times), while also being available for as-needed support. One of our key tasks is to support you as parents while you work to manage not only your Oli child, but your work, the rest of your family, and your own anxieties in this uncertain time.

Yesterday we tested our beta version of this program with some of our faculty on campus and the rest in various locations to test the "remote" part. I was profoundly impressed by what I saw. All of our faculty are leaning in 100% and the leadership and program engineering Abby Hood and the rest of our leadership team are providing is remarkable. As a result of being so impressed, I was also relieved. I have said that we are in this together and this week's preparations have convinced me that we can keep this promise in all the ways that matter most.

I know that I speak for my entire faculty when I say that it is a gift and an honor to have work that involves, primarily, loving and supporting young people and their families when they need it most, which is, of course, right now.

We will be in touch throughout the break to keep you informed and to orient you to what's next. Meanwhile, hang in there. Go for a walk. Rake some leaves. Cook a nice meal. Maybe even pick up some trash. Anything that feels normal is good right now.

Warmly, hopefully,

*Will*

Will Laughlin, Head of School/CEO

STAY CONNECTED:



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